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PEACE—AND WITH A LEAGUE

SINCE the ADVOCATE last commented on the work of the Peace Commission in Paris much has happened to make its precise outcome seem difficult to predict. At one time, on a given day in March, there were reported no less than twenty clashes of armed forces in Europe, Africa, and Asia, so far from a state of peace was the world. In some cases—as in Russia and Germany—it was civil war, with the lines of cleavage social and not sectional or political in the conventional sense of that word. In other instances—as in Egypt and Korea—it was the revolt of dependencies or outlying portions of empires against power imposed from above. In yet others it was the clashing of newly-created States with older nations. But in all cases it was a manifestation of a spirit of unrest, discontent, and resort to violence, indicating that desperate, tragic, and enervating as the Great War from 1914 to 1918 had been, it by no means had taught humanity the lesson it was supposed to have learned when the Armistice was signed five months ago.

Coincident with this resort to arms for the settlement of issues brought to the surface by the very turbulence and havoc of the terrible Armageddon caused by the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs there has been another disturbing factor operative, complicating and retarding the deliberations of the Peace Commissioners. Like heads of States, financiers of highest rank and experts in social economics throughout the world, the

makers of the peace compact and the framers of the League of Nations have been taught by dire experience during the past month that the quicker the world's physical hunger is satisfied the sooner its political, ethical, and spiritual restoration can begin. Or to put the case more concretely, Mr. Hoover symbolizes more rather than less importance for the safety of civilization than he did during the war, much as that was. Which being the case, much of the time of the Paris Commissioners and the governments they represent, has perforce been given to devices for succoring peoples that can hardly be counted upon either to think or to act normally until they have something like adequate physical nourishment and the necessities of a life to be lived on a scale that is human. To meet this grave situation has required patience as well as generosity of feeling and tact; and because of the consequent delay, the commissioners have been blamed when they really should have been commended.

Considering the abnormality of many of the phases of the situation they have faced, and the unprecedented complexity of the problems to be solved—problems military, political, economic, religious, and racial—they have been prompt, as such conferences go. Moreover they have coupled with the responsible task of making a peace the prophetic duty of defining future standards of international relations. And this formally and not only in terms of a covenant but also in the articulation of a society of nations, an outlining of courses of procedure to be followed in given contingencies, and in prescribing penalties for offenders.

If in carrying on this titanic labor in a world as well as in a local environment which has been hectic and neurotic there have been some errors of policy, some malapropos expressions of opinion, some displays of passion and feeling, and some modification of the "era of good feeling" with which the conference opened, it is not at all surprising. M. Clemenceau, oldest and most experienced of all the major actors in the greatest play that Paris or any other world-capital ever staged, said as soon as the armistice was signed in November that it would be harder to win the peace than it had been to win the war; and if France and the other Powers did not understand what he meant at the time, they know it now. The war task was to conquer Germany. The conference's task has been to conquer self, the French-self, the Italian-self,

the Polish-self, and that not only temporarily but permanently, for an enduring peace and a League of Nations posit some surrender of self-hood by nations for the sake of world-order. One of New England's wisest spiritual leaders stresses this fact, on page 110.

In the United States during the past month the opportunity has been seized to educate the rank and file in the fundamental issues of the League of Nations plan tentatively adopted by the conference in February, and to make the average man understand some of the implications of the contradictory and obviously—in many cases—biased despatches of the correspondents in Paris and other European capitals. Thanks to the elaborate, and in the main, dispassionate discussions of the text of the League's proposed constitution by men of the calibre of Mr. Root, Mr. Hughes, and President Lowell of Harvard University, and owing to the generous space which the press has given to the text of the addresses by these and other leaders of opinion, and also to weighty letters from the best citizens of most communities, there has been a decided shifting of criticism, among the "intellectuals," toward the plan of the League. As for the "plain people" a majority of them have not needed to be converted.

The reflex influence of the debate of the plan in the home press and public forums upon the American peace commissioners will be shown by some of the modifications and alterations in the revised draft of the covenant and constitution. Presumably these concessions will ensure ratification of the treaty by the Senate. They should, and they will if national public opinion still is effective with members of the upper house of Congress.

The formal invitation of the Council of Four to the German Government to send delegates to Versailles for a meeting of the Peace Congress (not the Conference) on April 25th, indicates that the first stage of the important function of peace-making is about to close. The major policies of the Entente belligerents, the United States, and the neutral nations have been agreed upon and defined. Upon the sort of reply that Germany makes and upon the success with which she and other nations combatting communistic, proletarian socialism meet their dread new foe from out the East, depend the character of the history to be made during the second stage of the negotiations. Prophets differ much as to what Germany really intends to reply to the terms. She may resist, but we doubt it.

She will know on April 25th that the victorious Powers intend to indict formally not only the nation but its officials, military and civilian, who were responsible for atrocities, not exempting William II, the "All

Highest." Whether he will be tried by a judicial tribunal for crimes against humanity, or without trial be permanently interned, remains to be seen. But he is to suffer punitive, retributive action of some sort.

She also will be told that her army and navy are to be reduced to a police and not left on a militarist basis; and that her ability to strike at France again is to be impaired seriously by stipulations as to territory on both banks of the Rhine, stipulations that will have back of them the permanent authority of the League of Nations as well as ceaseless French scrutiny.

She will be asked to assent in principle to the validity of a bill of damages and reparation vaster and heavier than any nation ever was assessed, because never before did a nation cause such wanton destruction of property on land and sea. If the terms of payment of this bill of damages are necessarily adjusted to present untoward economic conditions within the former empire, it will be because policy dictates such a course.

She also will find that in addition to the Spartan-like rigor with which she is to be held to an accounting in military action and economic recuperation, she at the same time has to face a world that plans to admit her back into the sisterhood of nations as a constituent member of a leagued and federated world, only after she has shown contrition as well as made restitution.

She is to learn that her former colonies and possessions in Africa, Asia, and the islands of the sea are to pass out of her hands into those of "mandatories," who will act as stewards or trustees for the League of Nations.

Taking a cold, critical view of the past month's doings they do not incite cynicism or depression but rather hope and meliorism. All the displays of selfish nationalism, all the clashes between rival conceptions of the State, all the lurches backward toward the "balance of power" theory, all the realistic disclosures of abysmal misery already wrought and gigantic debts impending, all the hints at clashings of the wills and ambitions of leaders of States, and all the portents of a dissolving social structure brought about by communistic socialism on the rampage, have preached the same lesson to the race. Men must love not hate, co-operate not compete, follow liberty under law and not license, and federate as nations, with regard for the rights of the weak and small, and insistence on the duties as well as the rights of the powerful and large political units that men call "States." This is "idealism." True, but, also, it is the least expensive "realism," measured by standards of the most mercenary commercialism, except of course for profiteers, makers of munitions of war, and the middlemen who cater to the creditor classes of society. These

"groups" in all lands, among all races, and at all stages of civilization have wanted war; they still want it and hope to block enactment by the international conference now sitting in Paris of any organic act for a world State that will put the judge above the soldier. Of course, their hirelings are on duty in Paris, and among them are Judas and Machiavelli.

NATIONS LEAGUED FOR HEALTH

MR. HENRY P. DAVISON, Chairman of the Committee of Red Cross Societies, gave a dinner to the representatives of the International Press in Paris February 21, where he outlined certain significant plans for the salvage of life and the reconstruction of the bodies of men. Viewing "Peace" as the peace of mind and the peace of body, as a normal life freed of unlawful or unreasonable interference, Mr. Davison called attention to the tragic situation of the world today, its lack of proper foods, of sufficient medical service, of scientific and general health practice. It properly seems to him that the International Red Cross is now in a position to take up these problems. On the day of the signing of the Armistice the American Red Cross Organization itself was four times the size of the American Expeditionary Forces. In other words: there were 8,000,000 men and women working for the Red Cross in America alone. To this service 47,000,000 American people voluntarily contributed funds. When one bears in mind that this is but one of five such organizations, the potential power of its experience, if co-ordinated, is very impressive.

It seems that a Conference of the organizations of the five Great Powers has been recently held at Cannes. Afterward they met in Geneva, with the result that there is now a Committee with an accordion name known as: "Committee of Red Cross Societies to formulate and to propose to the Red Cross Societies of the world an extended program of Red Cross activities in the interests of humanity." Headquarters have been established at Cannes, and a Paris office at 2 Place de Rivoli. It is proposed to take up first the subjects of hygiene and sanitation, tuberculosis, nursing, venereal diseases, malaria, and certain other infectious maladies. The plan covers curative and preventive treatment. It is not proposed that the organization shall carry out the programs in detail, but rather that it shall stimulate and encourage existing agencies to increase endeavor, or, in cases where there are no such agencies, it shall see that such agencies are developed. The plan is to utilize the experience of the Red Cross to the co-ordination of all efforts making for a more wholesome manhood. Through its organization it plans to keep the world in-

formed of the advances made by science within the field here indicated. The results which they hope to accomplish may be summarized as follows: To awaken peoples in every country to a sense of obligation, to spread the fruits of science for the prevention and the healing of disease, and to organize aid against the inevitable disasters.

This is certainly ambitious and worthy, we believe, of men of large ideas and great power. If the plans tentatively set forth elsewhere in these columns, avoid falling over the "vested interests" and arousing jealousies, if their "over-head" is kept down and their affairs conducted according to business principles, then this great ideal, so clearly set before us in Paris that Washington's birthday eve, should, as Mr. Davison said: "develop into the greatest humanitarian force yet set in motion in the interest of all races, all sects, all creeds, and all colors in the world." This enterprise, representing the Red Cross Societies of France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the United States, and supported by the Governments of these countries, may well prove to be a League of Nations indeed, a league buttressed upon that most enduring of all laws, the law epitomized in the long ago by a certain Samaritan on a road in a suburb of Jericho.

JUSTICE IN ARMY DISCIPLINE

THE Clemency Board, appointed, following the armistice, to review the cases of all soldiers remaining in confinement, announced, April 8th, that in consideration of only one-third of the cases under its jurisdiction it already had reduced the average sentence from seven years and four months to one year and nine months. A total of 9,339 years has been struck from the aggregate sentences. The natural query of the lay mind is, why such severity at first, and was it due to an archaic system of military justice under which the Army of the United States was and is operating, or was it due to the personnel of the courts-martial? Thanks to Lieutenant Colonel Ansell, a West Pointer, and other persons who came into the judge-advocate's department of the Army from outside the military machine, the War Department has been forced to give way by publicity and by the pressure of public opinion made righteously indignant by facts that have been disclosed. The American Bar Association, Congress, and the War Department itself are now enlisted in behalf of justice to the enlisted man, volunteer, or drafted. Secretary Baker, very wisely, just before he sailed for France, April 7th, retreated from his position of opposition to Lieutenant Colonel (former General) Ansell, and invited him to share in drafting proposed remedial leg-